

The most important thing we ever said in the DLC was that in the end there can be no successful opportunity without responsibility, and you can't run a country unless everybody recognizes that we are in a community in which we have responsibilities to one another and in which we go up or down together. That was the most important thing we ever said.

So I ask you as you leave here, I hope you will go home and talk about how the ideas that you have fought for are being brought to life in this administration. But more important than that, I hope you will go home and remember that no matter who the President of the United States is, until the American people are prepared to take responsibility for their futures and until we are prepared to recognize again not just in our rhetoric but in our lives that this is one country and we have got to find a way to make a strength out of our diversity; we have got to stop, to stop wasting so many kids; we have got to stop permitting the incredible level of social disintegration that we have permitted—we will never become what we ought to.

And when we become the party that is the grassroots, bottom-up, personal responsibility, community-oriented party committed not only to saying to the President and the Congress, "This is what we want you to do for America," but to proclaiming every day, "Here is what we are doing for America," we will not be where we all set out to go. I think we're well on the way.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:31 a.m. at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to George Bruno, DLC New Hampshire State chapter organizer, and David Osborne, consultant with the National Performance Review.

Exchange With Reporters at the Sheraton Washington Hotel

December 3, 1993

Personal Security and Responsibility

Q. [*Inaudible*—as far about what you meant by personal security when you talked about that theme and also about values?

The President. Personal security means, among other things, that people who are out there struggling in this country to work for a living and raise their kids should be safe on the streets and should have access to health care and should have access to a decent education for the course of their lifetimes.

Q. But you also mentioned personal responsibility along with that. What responsibility do they have?

The President. Well first of all, the Government cannot create success. The people have responsibilities in the area of work to make sure they're educated and trained. They're going to have responsibilities in the welfare reform area to take education, training and move from welfare to work. They're going to have responsibilities in the health care area, those who don't have health insurance, to pay for some of their own health care.

And in a larger sense, in every community in this country we can put 100,000 more police officers out there. We can train them right. But people are going to have to start recovering these families and these neighborhoods community by community. The private sector is going to have to invest in these neighborhoods. We've got these empowerment zones which give people tax incentives to invest in poor neighborhoods, but people who live in those cities are going to have to invest in them.

Q. Are you going to start talking to people about maybe not having children they can't afford to take care of? Is this something that you're worried about?

The President. Well, I talked about this a lot in the last couple of days. We've got to bring down the number of children who are born out of wedlock; that's what we've got to do. And people are going to have to think more about their future, more about their children's future, and when they do have children both parents are going to have to take more responsibility for them. We're going to have to crack down on identification of paternity, on child support enforcement. We're going to have to demand that people take more responsibility for the consequences of their action, including taking care of their children.

Q. Are you going to be talking about that more in the future? Is this something we're going to hear about?

The President. Absolutely. One of the reasons I asked Dr. Elders to be the Surgeon General is because we have been involved in an effort for years to try to drive down this teen pregnancy rate. I think that the out-of-wedlock teen pregnancy rate is threatening the whole family structure of communities in this country and undermining our ability to recover as a people.

Democratic Leadership Council

Q. Have you made up with the DLC?

The President. I don't think there's anything to make up about. Breaux saved my budget.

Q. He didn't vote for the Brady bill.

The President. He saved the budget. But the DLC—well, there's no political correctness test here. Nobody can agree on every issue. But the DLC endorsed the Brady bill early. The DLC was an early supporter of the Brady bill, an early supporter of family medical leave, and—

Q. You haven't been critical about them, so they've been a little critical of you.

The President. Yes, but that's why I— they said some things about the budget earlier on that I thought were not accurate. But Breaux didn't; he stayed with us on it and helped us pass it. So did Lieberman. So did Steny. So did most of the leaders. But I think they were wrong, and I said that.

On the health care thing, if you go back and read the DLC's health care package, which was written by Jeremy Rosner who now works in the White House, I think we're much closer on health care than you think. I think that a lot of this stuff has been overblown. Every time one of them or one of us says, "Here's what the difference is between our two health care plans," somebody says, "Oh, they're dumping on each other again." I think that it's just an honest discussion. I predict that you will see an accommodation that will cause a health care plan to pass next year that has universal coverage and good benefits, and that's what I want.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:37 a.m. at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on Signing the Hazard Mitigation and Relocation Assistance Act of 1993

December 3, 1993

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1670, the "Hazard Mitigation and Relocation Assistance Act of 1993."

The flooding that occurred in the Midwest this past summer was unprecedented in our history in scope, magnitude, and duration. The sheer number of victims, flooded homes, farms, and businesses, and the extent of damage to public facilities called for an unprecedented response from the nine affected States, local governments, volunteers, and the Federal Government—and respond they did.

Now that most of the flood waters have receded, it is time to reestablish lives disrupted by the weeks and months of rain and flooding and to rebuild property damaged by those waters. For many, rebuilding in the same place will be out of the question. And for many who want to move, relocating off the flood plain may not be possible without help.

With this legislation, my Administration and the Congress have taken an important step toward providing the help needed. This Act authorizes a greater Federal contribution toward acquiring and relocating structures damaged by floods than was available before. It provides higher ceilings on the amounts of Federal disaster funds that can be available to help flood victims move out of harm's way. And in assisting in the relocation of homes and other structures, it provides greater assurance than perhaps any other measure that the people helped will not have to suffer such damage and disruption from flooding again. It will be less costly to help the flood victims move now and reestablish their lives